

School Choice Options

Once a student enrolls in the IEA Program, he/she will no longer be able to attend a public school; students must either be home schooled or enrolled in a private school. For more information on these options, please visit:

tn.gov/education/topic/non-public-schools

Where can parents get more information?

To subscribe to **receive monthly email updates** about the program and to get more information about the IEA Program, including parent resources and answers to frequently asked questions, please visit the IEA webpage on the department's website:

tn.gov/education/section/iea



If you have questions about the IEA Program, **need accommodations to access IEA materials, si habla español,**



or please email:

IEA.Questions@tn.gov



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Individualized Education Account Program

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Individualized Education Account (IEA) Program

The Individualized Education Account (IEA) Program provides the opportunity for parents of eligible students with disabilities to choose the education opportunities that best meet their child's own unique needs through access to public education funds. This program is for parents who want to enroll their child in a private or home school. Students must be in grades K-12 to be enrolled in the IEA Program. Students who reach 22 years of age on or before August 15 would not be eligible to enroll in the IEA Program for that school year.



Department of
Education

Individualized Education
Account (IEA) Program



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Who is eligible to enroll in the IEA Program?

An “eligible student” must be a Tennessee resident who meets **all of the following criteria**:

1) has an **active** individualized education program (IEP) through a public school district **in effect** at the time of request for participation in the program; **and**

2) meets at least one of the following requirements:

- was previously enrolled in a Tennessee public school during the two semesters (or one full school year) immediately preceding the semester in which the student receives an IEA,
- is entering kindergarten,
- moved to Tennessee within six months prior to the date the student receives an IEA, or
- received an IEA in the previous year; **and**

3) has one of the following disabilities identified in their IEP as their primary or secondary disability:

- autism,
- deaf-blindness
- hearing impairments,
- intellectual disability,
- orthopedic impairments,
- traumatic brain injury, and/or
- visual impairments.

How much funding will be awarded to each student’s IEA?

The average amount of the IEA annual award is approximately \$6,600 but will vary per district. The IEA award does not include federal funds or additional education funds that local governments contribute to the school district beyond the amount required by the state funding formula for education (BEP).



How can IEA funds be spent?

The funds will be deposited onto a pre-paid IEA debit card to use for education-related expenses following the payment schedule listed on the department’s website. Some examples of approved expenses include:

- private school tuition/fees/textbooks,
- educational therapy,
- educational tutoring,
- computer hardware, and
- curriculum.

Some expenses require pre-approval. For a complete list of approved expenses, and more information about the IEA Program, please read the IEA Parent Handbook posted on the IEA webpage: tn.gov/education/section/IEA

Before applying, parents should consider whether the amount of the IEA award is enough to cover the costs of all your child’s educational needs and expenses, and if not, whether you can afford to supplement the cost with your personal funds.

How do parents apply to enroll their child in the IEA Program?

The application window for students is now open. Completed applications must be received by the department by **3 p.m.**

CDT on April 3, 2017. To apply to enroll in the IEA Program, please visit the IEA web page at tn.gov/education/section/IEA

Before applying, parents should consider:

- all of their child’s educational needs and,
- the educational options available and,
- the services that their child is currently receiving and the cost of those services and,
- the amount of funding their child will receive in the IEA Program and what services IEA funding would cover.

Parents should fully understand that in order to participate they are **waiving all of their child’s rights to receive services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**; thus, the child will no longer have an IEP. Additionally, they are releasing the public school district from all obligations to educate the student. School districts are not required to provide any services to students enrolled in the IEA Program and are not accountable for their academic progress.

The *IEA Parent Handbook* further lists all the responsibilities for parents/students enrolled in the program.